next day Prince Lvov sent a letter to Chkheidze inviting the Executive Committee to open negotiations on its participation in the Cabinet. The Committee declined the offer by a small majority.

On May 12, Guchkov, the Minister of War, resigned. Apparently the immediate cause of this step was the clash between General Kornilov and the Petrograd Soviet. In the Tauride Palace Guchkov's resignation was taken as a sign of the government's disintegration. Without reopening the debate, the Executive Committee decided to enter a coalition government, this time by an overwhelming majority.

THE FIRST COALITION

Discussion of conditions for entering the coalition continued all night. It was decided not to ask for a majority or for key positions in the Cabinet but to submit a definite program to the new government as the basis of the coalition. This decision was wrong in my opinion: in turbulent times the composition of a government is more important than its announced program. Each point of the program provoked a heated debate in the Committee. The Bolsheviks tried to make the draft unacceptable to non-Socialist parties; the moderates sought to conciliate without yielding essential points.

Negotiations between the Committee and the government began on May 15. The Cadets insisted on keeping foreign affairs in Miliukov's hands and objected to the appointment of Chernov, the leader of the S-R party, as the Minister of Agriculture. Prince Lvov was particularly eager to have Tseretelli in the Cabinet, but the latter refused, preferring to continue his work in the Tauride Palace. Then Lvov suggested a compromise: Tseretelli was to join the government without administrative responsibilities, formally as Minister of Post and Telegraph but practically as a minister without portfolio.

Our draft of the platform was accepted without essential changes, despite the opposition of the right wing of the Cadets. The new platform went much further than the agreement between the first Cabinet and the Soviet.

It began with the declaration that the aim of the government was a just negotiated peace based on the right of all peoples to self-determination and that the new Coalition Government would take necessary steps to gain the Allies' support for this policy. Further, it outlined the government's policy for the army: to strengthen its fighting ability in defense and attack, on the basis of its new spirit and consolidation of its democratic organizations. The economic part of the program promised a relentless struggle against the crises in agricultural